EXPLORING WORK-LEISURE CONFLICT: EVIDENCE FROM FRONT-LINE EMPLOYEES IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE OF SRI LANKA

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1. Introduction

Work-leisure conflict is one of the emerging areas in work and non-work literature. It occurs when an individual's work and leisure roles are incompatible with one another. Although having a pleasing congruence between work and leisure is critically important for employees' overall well-being, preliminary investigation revealed that front-line employees experience a higher level of work-leisure conflict. In this background, the study aimed to explore the types of work-leisure conflict, their reasons, and strategies used to manage it.

2. Research Methodology

To understand the inner meaning of front-line employees' work-leisure experiences, the current study was based on the interpretivism paradigm, inductive approach, and qualitative-mono method research design. Following a phenomenological strategy, nine in-depth interviews were conducted with front-line employees who worked in the hotel industry in the Southern Province of Sri Lanka. The participants were selected using a purposive sampling method. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

3. Findings and Discussion

The study found different types (i.e., time-based, strain-based, behavior-based, transportation-based, and technology-based) of work-leisure conflict. Further, reasons for work-leisure conflict include personal, organizational, social network related and external reasons. Furthermore, strategies used to manage work-leisure conflict include; individual (i.e., self-care and well-being, having a positive mindset, setting boundaries, and disconnecting from the work) and organizational strategies (i.e., event management and employee engagement, relationship building and support, organizational policies, and arranging workshops).

4. Conclusion and Implications

Managers and front-line employees in the hotel industry can use the findings of this study to understand and manage work-leisure conflict. Although work-leisure conflict is a relatively explored area in developed countries, few researches have been conducted in the Sri Lankan context. Thus, the study addresses the contextual gap by identifying the unique experiences of front-line employees.

*Keywords***:** Hotel Industry, Types, Reasons, Strategies, Work-leisure Conflict.